

## Week Five: The Manners of Conversation

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## Selecting Suitable Topics

[1] In Sura Al-Haj, Allah described the believers 'And they have been guided to the purest of speeches; and guided to the path of Him who is worthy of all praise.'

[2] When you talk during your visit, say only what fits the situation and be brief.

[3] If you are the youngest among those sitting, don't speak unless you are asked to, or unless you know that your speech and words will be well received and will please the host and other guests.

[4] Don't prolong your speech.

[5] Use a proper tone of voice.

[6] Anas reported that 'the Prophet's talk was clear and concise. Not too much nor too little. He disliked loquacity and ranting.' Bukhari narrated a Hadith in which Aisha said 'The Prophet's talk [was so little] that you can count his words'.

[7] If you hear the Azan you must listen and respond to the call of Allah.

[8] Those hearing the Azan should listen to it and quit speech, study and even Quran recitation.

[9] Al-Bukhari narrated a Hadith by Abu Saeed Al-Khudri that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: 'If you heard the call say like what the Muezzin is saying.'

[10] In another Hadith reported by Jaber that the Prophet said 'He deserves my help on the day of judgment who said when hearing Azan: O' Allah, the Lord of this perfect call and imminent prayer, please award Mohammad the help, nobility, and the desired status you promised him.'

[11] Imam Abdul Razaq narrated in his Musanaf that Ibn Juraig said: 'I was told that people used to listen to Azan like they would listen to recitation of Quran. They would repeat after the Muezzin. If he said: come to prayer, they will say: with the help and power of Allah. If he said: come to the good deed, they will say: with the will of Allah.'

## Talk in a Suitable Tone

[1] If you speak to a guest or any other person, whether in a gathering or alone, make sure that your voice is pleasant, with a low, audible tone.

[2] Raising your voice is contrary to proper manners and indicates a lack of respect for the person to whom you are talking.

[3] This manner should be maintained with friends, peers, acquaintances, strangers, the young and the old.

[4] Adhere to this with one's parents

[5] If appropriate, smile while talking to others.

[6] The Quran tells us that the advice of Luqman the Wise to his son was, '...and lower your voice,' directing him to speak in a gentle manner, for speaking loudly is detested and ugly.

[7] Verses two and three of Surat Al-Hujurat read: 'Oh you who believe! Raise not your voices, above the voice of the Prophet, nor speak aloud to him as you speak aloud to one another, lest your deeds become vain and you perceive not. Those that lower their voices in the presence of Allah's apostle, Allah has tested their hearts for piety, for them there is forgiveness and a great reward.'

[8] Imam Al-Bukhari in his Sahih reported that 'Abdullah bin Al-Zubair said that after the revelation of this verse, whenever Omar bin Al-Khattab wanted to speak to the Prophet (PBUH), he would talk as if whispering. The Prophet would hardly hear him and he would inquire about some of what Omar said, since he did not hear him well.

[9] Your talk should be clear, concise and to the point. Do not talk and talk and talk.

[10] Bukhari and Muslim reported that Anas said 'The Prophet's talk was precise clear, and succinct without undue elaboration.'

[11] Examples of pious ancestors.

## Art of Listening

[1] If a person started telling you or your group something that you know very well, you should pretend as if you do not know it.

[2] The honourable follower Imam 'Ata ibn Abi Rabah said: 'A young man would tell me something that I may have heard before he was born. Nevertheless, I listen to him as if I have never heard it before.'

[3] Khalid bin Safwan Al-Tamimi, who was with the two caliphs Omar bin Abdul Aziz; and Hisham bin Abdul Malik, said: 'If a person tells you something you have heard before, or news that you already learned, do not interrupt him or her to exhibit your knowledge to those present. This is a rude and an ill manner.'

[4] The honourable Imam 'Abdullah bin Wahab Al-Qurashi Al-Masri, a companion of Imam Malik, Al-Laith bin Sa'd and Al-Thawri, said: 'Sometimes a person would tell me a story that I have heard before his parents had wed. Yet I listen as if I have never heard it before.'

[5] Ibrahim bin Al-Junaid said: 'A wise man said to his son: 'learn the art of listening as you learn the art of speaking. Listening well means maintaining eye contact, allowing the speaker to finish the speech, and restraining yourself from interrupting his speech.'

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## NOTES

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## Discussions and Debates

- [1] If you have trouble understanding some of what has been said in a meeting, restrain yourself until the speaker finishes.
- [2] Gently, politely, and with proper introduction, ask for clarification. Do not interrupt a person's talk.
- [3] Different rule if the meeting is for study and learning.
- [4] If a colleague did not understand a matter and asked a scholar or an elder to explain, you should listen to what is being said.
- [5] Never utter any word belittling your colleague, nor should your face betray any such emotion.
- [6] When an elder or a scholar speaks, you should listen attentively to them.
- [7] If you did not understand something that was said, wait until the talk is finished.
- [8] Never raise your voice with the question, or be blunt to draw attention to yourself.
- [9] Never rush to answer if you are not very confident of your answer.
- [10] Never argue about something you do not know. Never argue for the sake of argument.
- [11] Never show arrogance with your counterparts especially if they hold a different opinion.

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### NOTES

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## Swearing by Allah

[1] To confirm a statement, many resort to swearing by the name of Allah (SWT) or one of His attribute.

[2] The name of Allah should not be used so lightly, and to swear by it is a very serious matter.

[3] Allah (SWT) in Sura Al-Nahil says 'And do not take your oath to practice deception between yourselves, with the result that someone's foot may slip after it was firmly planted'

[4] Always remember the hadith of the Prophet reported by Bukhari and Muslim 'Whoever believe in Allah and the Last Day should say something good or remain silent.'

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### NOTES

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## Answering a Question

[1] If a colleague was asked about something that you know, do not rush to answer.

[2] The honourable follower Mujahid Ibn Jabr recalled that Luqman the Wise said to his son: 'If another person was asked a question, never hasten to give the answer, as if you are going to gain booty or to win a precious prize. By doing so, you will belittle the one who was asked and will offend the inquirer and you will bring the attention of the obnoxious people to your stupidity and ill-manner.'

[3] Sheikh Ibn Batta, a Hanbali scholar, said: 'I was with Abu 'Omar Al-Zahid Mohammed ibn 'Abdul Wahed Al-Baghdadi - the Imam and linguist known also as Ghulam Th'alab. He was asked about an issue. I rushed and answered the inquirer. He turned toward me and asked: 'Do you recognize an officious character?' He suggested that I was a nosy person and made me feel very embarrassed.'

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### NOTES

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